

INFORMATION REPORT

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1. The present Soviet defenses along the Baltic Coast are based to a large extent on those constructed during the first period of Soviet occupation in 1940 and 1941. Numerous changes and improvements have been made since 1944, however.
2. Three centers of defense have been established:
 - a. Cape Irbeni to the Estonian archipelago
 - b. Paldiski, Estonia, to Porkkala, Finland
 - c. The Kronstadt bay defenses
3. The defenses consist of emplaced coastal batteries and strategically placed mine fields. The batteries are supported by motorized infantry detachments, armored forces, and mobile artillery units. Air support can also be counted upon.
4. The large 304 mm. guns have a range of 40-45 km. and are emplaced some distance back from the coast. They are built to command the coastal shipping routes. The large batteries are in each case supported by a number of 152 mm. guns.
5. Provisions have also been made for close combat defenses. Concrete fortifications for infantry and permanent emplacements for heavy machine guns have been prepared behind the beaches. The hinterland, furthermore, is liberally spotted with antitank obstacles.
6. The principal Soviet garrison is located on the island of Saaremaa (Ösel) and is reported to number 30,000 troops, including some motorized and armored units. Approximately 10,000 men are stationed on the island of Hiiumaa (Dagø). Motorized infantry and armored artillery units are included in the garrison. Three permanent fighter airfields have been built on Hiiumaa.

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7. A large submarine base is in the process of construction at Loksa (approximately 59°35'N-25°43'E), about 70 kilometers east of Tallinn. Large-scale construction activities are also under way at the port of Paldiski, to the west of Tallinn, with the aim of transforming this small harbor into a major Soviet base. The Soviet occupation of the Finnish town of Porkkala completes the blockade of the Gulf of Finland.
8. Elaborate subterranean fortifications have been built on the Leetse promontory (approximately 59°23'N-24°05'E) in Estonia. The underground works include heavy batteries, fuel depots, power plants, and subterranean railways. The construction equipment at most of the Baltic bases is of American origin.
9. The Soviet troops stationed along the northern Baltic coast have been recruited exclusively from the autonomous republics of Central Asia. They are quartered in underground barracks and have no contact with the civilian population.
10. The original Estonian population has been deported and replaced, for the most part, by gangs of forced laborers of all nationalities under MVD supervision. Included in these gangs are numerous German PWs and Vlassov Army veterans.
11. ~~Four~~ five coastal batteries are located approximately one half a nautical mile directly north of the entrance to Klaipeda harbor. They were observed to be engaged in firing practice at canvas targets which were towed on floats out at sea. Firing did not stop when the ship on which the informant was traveling passed in this vicinity. The impact of the firing was slight and the shots were poorly aimed.
12. On the north side of the channel in Klaipeda harbor, on the south pier, there are twelve anti-aircraft batteries mounted on twelve eight-wheeled railroad cars. The guns are approximately 75-88 mm. They have neither recoil brakes (mundingsbremse) nor firing shields (flammeskjuler). They are mounted on revolving carriages on the railroad cars and are well-kept and guarded.

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